

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0550

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 09054

EXDIS

E.O. LL652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, CU, US

SUBJECT: PRISONER EXCHANGE

REF: STATE 130790

1. EMBASSY CONTACTED VOGEL TO SUGGEST MEETING IN BONN JUNE 6 TO EXCHANGE LETTERS AND AGREE ON DETAILS, INDICATING OUR READINESS TO COMPLETE THE EXCHANGE NEXT WEEK. VOGEL SAID MEETING JUNE 6 WOULD BE PREMATURE, AS HE DOES NOT EXPECT WORD ON DATE AND DETAILS FROM HIS END BEFORE JUNE 9, AND WOULD THUS NOT HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION THAN THAT PASSED TO MEEHAN AND REPORTED BONN'S 8901. (HIS EXPRESSION WAS THAT HE WILL NOT HAVE ANSWERS "UNTIL SOMEONE COMES HERE"--I.E., TO EAST BERLIN.) HE SUGGESTED MEETING EARLY NEXT WEEK. SINCE PFUND WILL BE IN BERLIN JUNE 9-11, APPOINTMENT MADE FOR HIM TO SEE VOGEL AT 1300 JUNE 9 IN WEST BERLIN OFFICES OF ATTORNEY JUERGEN STANGE. PFUND WILL BE PREPARED TO EXCHANGE LETTERS AND DISCUSS DETAILS.

2. IN VIEW OF ABOVE DEVELOPMENTS, TIMING ENVISAGED REFTEL WILL OBVIOUSLY NOT BE POSSIBLE. TO OBVIATE NEED FOR CONSULTATION WITH DEPARTMENT WHILE PFUND IS IN BERLIN, IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL TO HAVE, BEFORE HE LEAVES BONN FOR BERLIN AFTERNOON OF JUNE 8, AN INDICA-
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TION OF THE REQUIRED LEAD TIME FOR ARRANGEMENTS DEPART-

MENT HAD ENVISAGED FOR JUNE 11. IF VOGEL GIVES US A DATE HE COULD BE IN HAVANA, MAY WE WORK FROM THAT TO SET DATE FOR FLIGHT TO WASHINGTON AND SAME-DAY RELEASE IN LEWISBURG?

3. IN ANTICIPATION OF QUESTIONS VOGEL MAY ASK, WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON FOLLOWING:

HOW WOULD VOGEL BE TRANSPORTED FROM WASHINGTON TO LEWISBURG AND THEN WITH THOMPSON TO PORT OF DEBARKATION?

GIVEN NEED FOR INS INTERVIEW ON DEPARTURE, DOES IT MATTER FROM WHICH CITY THEY DEPART TO EUROPE?

DOES VOGEL NEED A VISA TO ENTER OR LEAVE U.S.?

WILL THOMPSON BE GIVEN A PASSPORT FOR EXIT FROM US AND FOR TRANSITING INTERMEDIATE COUNTRIES EN ROUTE TO GDR?

4. RE PARA 2 REFTTEL, MEEHAN'S INTERPRETATION OF REFERENCE TO THOMPSON'S "TALKING TOO MUCH" IS THAT VOGEL'S SIDE IS WORRIED NOT ABOUT SUBSTANCE OF WHAT HE MIGHT SAY BUT JUST ABOUT POSSIBILITY THAT HE MIGHT START MAKING NOISE THAT WOULD LEAD TO PUBLICITY ON SOVIET AND GDR INTEREST IN HIS CASE.

5. RE THREAT FROM THOMPSON'S ALLEGED SON, PFUND WILL GO OVER POINTS IN PARA 6 REFTTEL WITH VOGEL. GIVEN VOGEL'S JUNE 1 STATEMENTS TO MEEHAN, INCLUDING CLAIM THAT HE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO DEVELOP ANY INFORMATION ON A SON IN THE GDR, WE DOUBT THAT ANY FURTHER CLARIFICATION WILL BE FORTHCOMING. MEEHAN IS ALSO CONFIDENT THAT VOGEL IS CLEAR ON THE POINT THAT US DECISION WAS MADE PRIOR TO AND THEREFORE NOT INFLUENCED BY THIS THREAT, BUT WE WILL REITERATE THE POINT.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE ON QUESTIONS RAISED PARAS 2 AND 3, TO REACH BONN BY NOON JUNE 7.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BONN09054
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750196-1112
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750675/aaaacqmi.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 130790
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRISONER EXCHANGE
TAGS: CASC, CU, US, (LUNT), (THOMPSON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006